

What's Cooking at CAB

With Chef Michael Ollier

Beefy trends for 2012

Writing this in January, I thought about the calendar. Kicking off the New Year with resolutions and predictions for the future isn't really my style. Most resolutions are broken within a month, and predictions are never quite right. I'm more interested in easing myself into another 365 trips around the sun, setting achievable goals along the way and making more predictable predictions once the trends of the year have really taken hold.

With that said, I've been working on compiling a list of hot food trends to share with our licensed restaurants and retailers. I use the term "trends" loosely — these aren't flash-in-the-pan hot spots of focus for those in the beef business. They're ideas and techniques that have been around for a while and have staying power, but perhaps haven't made it to the mainstream yet.

Over the next couple of "What's Cookin'" columns, I'll dig into some of these trends and provide tips on how to incorporate what's hot in the finest restaurants in your home. With your help, I'm looking forward to these trends continuing for a while.

Creative cuts

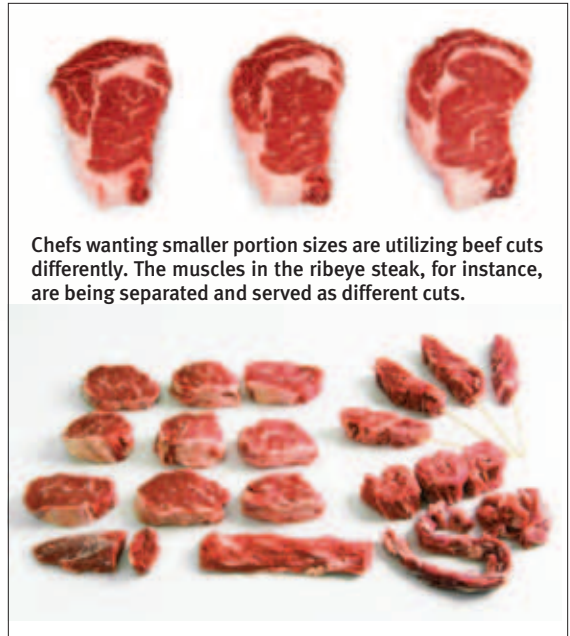
Chefs especially are looking to serve smaller portion sizes to meet customer demand. As cattle continue to grow bigger, serving a consistent and realistic portion size

becomes more of a challenge. They're utilizing cuts differently and discovering new beef cuts to serve. Here are a few:

Rib filet — On a ribeye steak, you can usually see a seam of fat that runs around one side of the steak, about an inch in from the edge. What some don't realize is that's the dividing line between two different muscles — the ribeye and the spinalis. Those two muscles are usually cut together to make a ribeye steak, but recently chefs have been separating them on the subprimal and serving a "Filet of Rib." Then they save the spinalis, also known as the rib cap, to create another dish (think the best beef skewer you ever imagined).

This trend is hugely driven by increased carcass sizes, where in some cases an oversized ribeye literally won't fit on a plate. Taking the cap off and re-using it in another dish solves portion problems and creates a delicious new menu item — win, win!

Split strip — This is another twist on a familiar cut, also driven by a desire to make



Chefs wanting smaller portion sizes are utilizing beef cuts differently. The muscles in the ribeye steak, for instance, are being separated and served as different cuts.

more reasonable portion sizes. It's exactly what it sounds like — splitting the whole strip loin in half to create the "Manhattan Steak," a smaller version of the traditional New York Strip Steak.

Tri-tip — This long-time West Coast favorite is heading east! Once confined to California and surrounding areas, the uncommon cut is gaining popularity. If you've ever tried it, you'll understand why. It's an economical, underutilized cut from the bottom sirloin that is easy to prepare and incredibly flavorful.

Culotte — The culotte is another cut from the sirloin that's finally getting deserved recognition. The culotte is to the sirloin what the spinalis is to the ribeye — the "cap" muscle that is easily separated and served on its own.

If you don't see these cuts at your retail counter or on your beef processor's order sheet, ask them about it. Explain what they are, and you'll likely be in for a treat.

Here's a great recipe that I use with a tri-tip, but it would also be great for a culotte. Give it a try, and look out for more tips and trends for 2012 and beyond in next month's column.

Until next time,
— Chef Michael



Tex Mex Tri-Tip Rub

Ingredients:

2-lb. CAB® brand tri-tip roast
1 Tbs. ancho chili powder
1 tsp. cumin
1 tsp. coarse kosher salt
½ tsp. sugar
½ tsp. garlic powder
½ tsp. onion powder
½ tsp. dried oregano

Instructions:

Combine all ingredients and evenly rub on roast. Cover tightly in plastic wrap or zipper-locking plastic bag. Refrigerate at least 2 hours, overnight for the most flavor throughout. Grill or broil for 5 minutes on each side for a good caramel char. Transfer to cooler side of grill or 250° F oven and finish



cooking to desired doneness, 10-20 minutes. Use an internal read thermometer for accuracy. Allow to rest 10 minutes before slicing thinly against the grain.